

Dear Mr. Wanamaker:

Thank you for your presentation before the Mississippi River Commission during the public meeting in Greenville, Mississippi, on April 9, 2003. In your statement you presented the following items of interest or concern.

a. Expressed appreciation for maintenance gravel for the main line Mississippi River levees in your district.

b. Discussed levee slides along the main line Mississippi River levees.

c. Discussed the status of design and construction items associated with the Mississippi River levees.

d. Expressed concern over the progress on the Big Sunflower River Maintenance Project and stressed your commitment to resumption of this maintenance project.

e. Discussed the Yazoo Backwater Project and the Levee Board's belief that the project offers an economic and environmental balance.

f. Discussed the proposal that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provide funds to the Levee Board for future demolition of the buildings at Greenville Engineer Yard.

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g. Requested that Vicksburg District explore offering incentives to retain personnel currently serving in critical positions.

The Commission shares your concern that a reliable levee roadway is needed at all times, but especially during high water. Funding requests are made each year for crushed stone to be placed on the Mississippi River levee system. Currently, a supply contract for crushed stone is being advertised by the Vicksburg District. Placement of the crushed stone under this contract is scheduled to begin later this month.

The Commission understands that levee slide repairs are critical to maintain the integrity of the Mississippi River levee system. The Vicksburg District conducted an inspection of the levee slides in your district in May and slide repairs are in progress. We anticipate all slides on the Mississippi River levee system should be repaired by December of this year.

Thanks to the close working relationship and support of the Board of Mississippi Levee Commissioners, levee enlargements and berm placement in the State of Mississippi are progressing well. Levee Item 488-L is scheduled for bid opening in July 2003 and consists of 8.8 miles of main line levee, utilizing 2 million cubic yards of riverside borrow and 3.8 million cubic yards of river sand. Careful planning between your Board and affected landowners over the past 3 years has made this large levee job possible. An additional 3.4 miles of levee, Item 474-L, is currently under design and scheduled for a Fiscal Year 2004 advertisement and award. This will complete the levees north of Arcadia Point in Issaquena County, Mississippi.

The Commission is also concerned about the restart of the Big Sunflower River Maintenance Project. The Vicksburg District is conducting the necessary studies to complete the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) as quickly as possible. The draft report is scheduled for completion in November 2003, with final SEIS in July 2004. The Commission appreciates the Levee Board's continued support to provide this maintenance project for the south delta region and commits to seek adequate funds to continue the project.

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The Commission appreciates your kind words regarding the handling of the turnover of Greenville casting field by the Memphis and Vicksburg Districts. In regard to the Corps providing funds to the Levee Board for future demolition of the buildings, the Commission is optimistic a mutual agreement can be reached. Memphis District will continue to discuss this issue with you and your board.

The Vicksburg District recognizes the importance of having appropriate management teams and processes in place to provide continuity and expertise for critical projects such as the Big Sunflower Maintenance and Yazoo Backwater Projects. Your idea

of offering monetary incentives to retain personnel has been verbally discussed with you by Mr. Doug Kamien.

Thank you for your comments before the Commission, and we look forward to hearing from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Don T. Riley
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President Designee, Mississippi
River Commission